



Reserve Info Bulletin

FY20 Coast Guard Tuition Assistance (TA) Policy

Did you know that reservists affiliated with the Selected Reserve (SELRES) are authorized to apply for and receive TA

NOW!

A copy of this year's TA message is attached. Note, the requirement to submit the "Tuition Assistance Counseling Worksheet" (Form ETQC-4147-2) as part of the application process with their CO, OIC, or first O-6/GS-15 in the chain of command. The command will use this form to ensure members meet the following eligibility criteria:

- a. Satisfactory progress toward completion of unit quals;
- b. Satisfactory progress toward watch station qual;
- c. Satisfactory proficiency of craft;
- d. Satisfactory conduct during the six months prior; and
- e. Satisfactory progress towards participation standards.

In addition, reservists must be making satisfactory progress in the current anniversary year and have met participation standards for the previous anniversary year. Reservists utilizing TA must also upload their most recent points statement to the myEducation portal prior to submitting their application.

Lastly, a complete TA application (degree plan, points statement, and command approval) must be received by ETQC **NO LESS Than 14 days prior to the class start date**, not including the date of submission to ETQC nor the class start date. **There are no exceptions or waivers to this policy!**

Questions should be directed to your local ESO.

#



Reserve Info Bulletin



R 041541 OCT 19

FM COMCOGARD FORCECOM NORFOLK VA//FC-C//

TO ALCOAST

UNCLAS //N01500//

ACN 122/19

SUBJ: FY20 COAST GUARD TUITION ASSISTANCE (TA) POLICY

A. Performance, Training, and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.10 (series)

B. Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series)

C. Voluntary Education Programs, DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1322.25D

D. COMCOGARD FORCECOM NORFOLK VA 231458 MAY 19/ACN 050/19

1. Pending the FY20 allocation of funding, this ACN announces the FY20 TA policy, effective 01 Oct 2019. This policy expands TA to include members of the SELRES (2.A.) and a first academic certificate (2.B.).

2. Policies and eligibility criteria:

a. TA is authorized for Active Duty military and if funded in the FY20 Coast Guard appropriation, Reserve members affiliated with the Selected Reserve (SELRES). In accordance with REF (B), members of SELRES must be drilling reservists with satisfactory progress in the current anniversary year and have met the participation standards for the previous anniversary year.

b. TA is now available for courses leading to the first certificate, Associate, Bachelor, and Master's degree. TA is not authorized for members pursuing additional degrees at the same or lower level regardless of how they received their first degree (e.g.: if the applicant already has a Bachelor's degree, TA must not be authorized for an Associates or Bachelor's degree even if the degree was obtained at a service academy, through the CG advanced education program, via grants or loans, VA benefits, or paid for out of the member's own pocket). TA is not authorized for any degree above a Master's degree, including Juris Doctor (JD), doctoral degrees (PhD), and similar terminal degrees.

c. The Coast Guard will fund tuition cost, not to exceed \$250.00 per semester hour, \$166.67 per quarter hour, or \$16.67 per clock hour. The annual cap for reimbursement of TA is \$2250.00 per member. Other Coast Guard sources of funding and reimbursement programs for education expenses can be found on the Education and Training Quota Management Command (ETQC) public-facing website: <https://www.forcecom.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/FORCECOM-UNITS/ETQC/Voluntary-Education/Active-Duty/>. The CG Foundation Education Grant (CGFEG) is the only grant administered by ETQC. Non-Coast Guard (federal and state) sources for need-based or merit-based financial aid can be found at: <https://studentaid.ed.gov> (including Pell grants, scholarships, and loans).

d. Federal student aid loans obtained by Coast Guard members for the purpose of funding their education will not be considered as a duplication of benefit and not subtracted when calculating the use of TA.

e. Members who have a Bachelor, Associate, or no degree, may use TA to pursue their first certificate, at any academic level; however members who currently hold a Master's degree, or higher, are not authorized to use TA to pursue a certificate. Earning a certificate does not preclude members from using TA, as authorized, for degrees; however, members should be aware of their lifetime credit hour limits. Certificates earned from completing course requirements, as part of a degree program and indicated on a member's degree plan, does not count toward the first certificate.



Reserve Info Bulletin

f. TA is not authorized for any fees. Any other college expense not listed as tuition is considered a fee (e.g. lab, graduation, internet usage, etc.).

g. A complete TA application (degree plan uploaded, points for drilling Reservist, command approved) must be received by ETQC NO LESS than 14 days prior to the class start date, not including the date of submission to ETQC nor the class start date. There are no exceptions or waivers to this policy. If students self-identify as being eligible for TA and begin a class without an approved TA authorization from ETQC, the student is solely responsible for all costs incurred for the course(s). This timeline is necessary to ensure members receive an approved TA authorization prior to the start of a course as required by REF (C) and in order to ensure schools are meeting the intent of Presidential Executive Order 13607.

h. Schools authorized to receive TA funding must participate and have a signed MOU with the DoD. The authorized school list can be found at the following website: www.dodmou.com.

i. It is the member's responsibility to establish a plan for successfully completing their certificate or degree requirements. It is strongly encouraged to engage your local Education Services Officer (ESO) to assist with this plan. Additionally, members are encouraged to submit their Joint Service Transcript to their Academic Institution. The Joint Service Transcript (JST) translates your military experience into academic credits that have the potential to reduce the number of credits required to complete your certificate or degree program. A copy of your JST can be submitted electronically to your institution by visiting: <https://jst.doded.mil>.

j. Mandatory degree plans are required after the completion of a second course or 6 semester hours using TA. Mandatory academic certificate plans are required before enrolling in and attending the first course within a certificate program funded with TA. If a degree plan has not been uploaded in the myEducation portal after the second course or prior to the start of certificate program, TA will not be authorized until this requirement is met. In order to be eligible for TA, members must have a legible certificate or degree plan that is in a PDF format and clearly list the academic institution, members printed name, and degree or certificate level. The degree or certificate plan must also list all courses required to complete the academic program. Courses not listed on an approved degree or certificate plan are not eligible for TA and will not be authorized by ETQC. All degree plans must be validated by ESO's prior to approving the TA application. Degree or certificate plans can typically be found on the member's student portal page. See the ETQC web site for specific instructions on uploading degree plans: <http://www.forcecom.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/FORCECOM-UNITS/ETQC/>.

k. Reservists utilizing tuition assistance must upload their most recent point statement to the myEducation portal, prior to submitting their TA application. Point statements will be used by ETQC to verify compliance with participation standards.

l. Units are strongly encouraged to build sufficient timelines to ensure applications are completed, degree or certificate plans are uploaded, and member receives command approval well in advance of the class start date. Additionally, units are also strongly encouraged to have at least one alternate ESO, designated in writing, to ensure no single point of failure exists which could prevent the timely approval of TA applications at the unit level.



Reserve Info Bulletin

m. After completion of a degree or certificate program, members shall ensure an official copy of their college transcript is sent to ETQC, in accordance with REF (D). Official transcripts must list the type of degree and the date of degree/certificate and the date of completion/conferment. Paper copies must be sent in a sealed envelope by the degree granting academic institution to: USCG ETQC Registrar's Office 300 E. Main Street, STE 1201, Norfolk, VA 23510 or transmitted securely to ETQC-SMB-RO@uscg.mil.

n. Reimbursement of TA will be required from the service member if the student does not successfully complete the course(s). For the purpose of reimbursement, a successful course completion is defined as a grade of a C or higher for undergraduate courses, a B or higher for graduate courses, and a pass for pass/fail grades.

o. Lifetime credit hour limits for TA are as follows: 130 semester hours for undergraduate work (or quarter/clock hours equivalent) and 40 semester hours for graduate work. Once a member has reached credit hour limits, TA will no longer be authorized regardless if the member has obtained a degree or certificate. CG members may only use TA to fund one vocational/technical program that awards in clock hours.

p. Deployable units engaging in the Afloat Education Program with an Embarked Instructor are reminded to follow the guidelines outlined in Article 11.G of REF (A). Commands are reminded to refrain from editing the MOU template posted on the ETQC's website to meet their unique needs. Any deviation should be vetted through ETQC for approval prior to starting the course(s).

3. COs, OICs or first O-6/GS-15 in the chain-of-command are expected to screen members using the Tuition Assistance Counseling Worksheet, Form ETQC-4147-2, to ensure members meet the following eligibility criteria:

- a. Satisfactory progress toward completion of unit quals,
- b. Satisfactory progress toward watch station quals,
- c. Satisfactory proficiency of craft,
- d. Satisfactory conduct during the six months prior, and
- e. Satisfactory progress towards participation standards if member is

SELRES.

4. TA approval authority can be delegated to the local ESO but must not be delegated below GS-9 or E-7 paygrades.

5. All additional eligibility constraints and requirements listed in REF (A) not addressed in this ACN still apply.

6. Members are strongly encouraged to seek ESO guidance when deciding which college or university maximizes military training, credits-by-exam, and provides the best value for tuition dollars. ESOs can also help identify other sources of funding, if desired.

7. These changes will be reflected in the next revision of REF (A), which will be released within the next year.

8. Please refer to your local ESO for field level questions. Questions from unit ESOs should be directed to CWO2 Anthony D. Nash (ETQC) at (757) 756-5337 or email at: ETQC-SMB-TAG@uscg.mil.

9. Released by RDML B. K. Penoyer, Commander, Force Readiness Command.

10. Internet release is authorized.